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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. TSHERING	(Bhutan)
later:	Mrs. TAVARES de ÁLVAREZ (Vice-Chairman)	(Dominican Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 106: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/50/3 A/50/254-S/1995/501, A/50/345, A/50/373, A/50/375, A/50/432 and A/50/433)

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL (continued) (A/50/3, A/50/89, A/50/95-E/1995/17, A/50/215-S/1995/475, A/50/407, A/50/425-S/1995/787, A/50/460 and A/50/461)

1. Mr. MUKASA-SSALI (Uganda) said that his country attached great importance to combating crime and had taken steps to protect society from organized crime, in particular by improving national legislation in the field of criminal justice. While States bore the primary responsibility for combating crime, the scale of criminality at the national and transnational levels was such that it often exceeded the capacity of individual countries. Furthermore, the global increase in organized transnational crime had now become a threat to international security. A coordinated international effort was needed, involving exchanges of information and expertise, mutual assistance in investigations and bilateral and multilateral agreements, in particular with regard to extradition. In particular, the international community must endeavour to implement the recommendations of the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime (Naples, 1994) and the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (Cairo, 1995), for security and justice were indispensable conditions for sustained development and human well-being.

2. In many developing countries, efforts to combat transnational crime were hampered by the lack of funds and up-to-date technology. Regional institutions had provided valuable technical assistance, training and advisory services but those efforts must be supplemented by greater contributions from a strengthened United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme. In particular, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Secretariat should be upgraded to a division. Of special interest to Africa was the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI). The Institute had been forced to scale down its programmes and activities because of a lack of resources. His Government welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the Institute (A/50/375) and endorsed his appeal to the General Assembly to authorize adequate funding for its activities from the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. Uganda called upon the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to reverse its decision of 1994 to terminate financial assistance to the Institute. While the strong support for the Institute expressed by the various United Nations policy-making bodies was most welcome, if UNAFRI was to continue to deliver its services it must operate on a more stable financial basis.

3. Ms. HOLÍKOVÁ (Czech Republic) said that for many countries, as for the United Nations, combating drug abuse and trafficking and drug-related crime had become a priority. The struggle would be long and difficult. At the same time, it was heartening to observe the determination of the international community to implement the Global Programme of Action against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic

substances. In addition, with the assistance of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), numerous regional activities had been organized. Given that drug production and trafficking were now largely controlled by organized transnational criminal networks, individual States could not hope to solve the drug problem alone. They must coordinate their efforts, the United Nations and its specialized bodies being an ideal focal point for that process.

4. In the Czech Republic, the opening up of borders and the influx of tourists from abroad, together with the fundamental transformation of the economic and social system, had led to increased drug trafficking and consumption. In addition, some drugs were now being produced locally. The Czech authorities were responding to international concern by preparing an enhanced anti-drug programme. Given the increase in drug abuse among the young, primary prevention would be a key aspect. Teams of teachers, medical staff and social workers would be trained in drug-related issues. The programme would also focus on health care and rehabilitation.

5. At the regional level, a ministerial conference on drugs had recently been held in Prague at which the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia had signed a memorandum of understanding. The assistance provided by UNDCP on that occasion had been greatly appreciated. A proposal had recently been made to convene a global conference on drugs under the United Nations auspices. It was her delegation's view that, while the proposal was well meant, such a conference would be of little benefit. The international community should concentrate on implementing existing programmes and strategies.

6. Mr. MISTRÍK (Slovakia) said that while his country, located in the heart of Europe, espoused the goal of a world without borders, it was also aware that when border controls were reduced, States became more vulnerable to drug trafficking. In Slovakia, which lay on the Balkan route connecting the drug-producing areas of South-West Asia with the markets of northern and western Europe, large quantities of illicit drugs had been seized. Though it had only limited experience in drug control, the Government was already taking action to control drug production, trafficking and use. Specifically, the Government had approved a national drug-control programme consistent with the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and subsequent international drug-control conventions. The programme focused on prevention and the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. In addition, it included legislative measures, in line with the commitments undertaken by Slovakia with a view to joining the European Union, to combat money-laundering and to control drug traffic.

7. At the regional level, Slovakia supported the subregional drug-control programme adopted at the Prague ministerial conference on drugs and, like the Czech Republic, had signed the memorandum of understanding. His Government welcomed the preparation in conjunction with UNDCP of six regional programmes aimed at limiting demand. Greater cooperation was vital both among European States and at the global level to combat the drug phenomenon.

8. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) said that since the invasion of Panama following allegations of drug trafficking against its leader, General Noriega, the problem of drug abuse and trafficking had ceased to be a purely social issue. Instead,

the struggle against drugs had become a vehicle for those nations which sought to impose their will over the rest of the world, an instrument of accusatory pressure used to extort concessions of all kinds. Thailand itself had experienced such pressure. Certain Thai politicians had been refused entry visas to the United States on the grounds that they had been involved in drug-related activities. The publication of the allegations, though without evidence to substantiate them, had enabled the Thai Government of the time to survive a motion of censure in Parliament. The case was a clear example of interference in domestic politics by another country in support of a friendly administration. The Government which had succeeded that administration had been threatened with sanctions including the curtailment of cooperation with Thailand.

9. The struggle against drug abuse and trafficking would be better served by effective measures at national level than by unsubstantiated allegations. The producing countries, for their part, were conscious of their duties in the field of drug control. Thailand, a transit country, had introduced a range of long-term programmes, for example the promotion of substitute crops, as well as reinforcing short-term repressive measures. The consumer countries, however, had not assumed their full share of responsibility. The efforts by the United States to combat the laundering of drug profits were welcome, but much remained to be done. Consumer countries must accept that drug production would cease without the fuel of continuing demand. Regrettably, the global approach to the drug problem had been marked by attempts to ignore that fundamental truth and to shift responsibility to the producer countries. Instead, consumer and producer countries should work together to combat the drug problem.

10. Mr. THEIN TIN (Myanmar) expressed his delegation's appreciation of the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and of its Executive Director, particularly in respect of the help provided to his Government in the implementation of its drug-eradication programmes. Myanmar shared the view that concerted action was essential at the national, regional and global levels; the scourge of illicit drugs transcended national borders and could only be overcome with international cooperation. Encouraging progress had been achieved in that respect, but much remained to be done. At the mid-point of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse 1991-2000, the international community should redouble its efforts to bring the scourge of drug trafficking to an end.

11. Since gaining its independence in 1948, Myanmar had given priority to the fight against narcotic drugs. His Government had laid down a two-pronged national strategy, involving drug eradication and prevention and efforts to gradually eliminate cultivation of the opium poppy. Also, integrated rural development programmes had been initiated in border areas where poppy cultivation had traditionally been the main source of income, in order to improve socio-economic conditions and encourage crop substitution. His Government had spent more than $400 million on those programmes, relying largely on its own resources; also, Japan had recently approved a grant of approximately $10 million. The border regions had been severely affected since independence by the activities of armed insurgent groups; however, 15 of the 16 groups had ended their armed struggle and were cooperating with the Government for the development of their respective regions. The peoples of the regions concerned had come to realize the need to eradicate illicit drug production, and had

submitted plans to the Government. The latter was still conducting military operations against an armed drug-trafficking group led by the warlord Khun Sa.

12. He was glad to report that Myanmar currently had narcotics-control and information-sharing agreements with all five States with which it had common borders, and had acceded to a subregional agreement with China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, and UNDCP; Cambodia and Viet Nam had since also acceded to the agreement. Myanmar had also concluded bilateral agreements with a number of countries in the region. His delegation was confident that such cooperative efforts would yield results for the benefit of all.

13. Mr. KULYK (Ukraine) said that his Government shared the concern of other States as to the constant growth of criminality, especially in such manifestations as transnational crime, drug trafficking, corruption and ecological crimes. The problem of crime prevention and criminal justice required coordinated efforts at national and international levels. The World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime (Naples, 1994), had been an important step towards increased cooperation; his delegation particularly welcomed the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime. It also attached great importance to the work of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The achievement of the objectives which had been agreed would be directly related to the level of funds available. It was important that an appropriate share of United Nations resources should be allocated to crime control.

14. Crime was currently an urgent problem for Ukraine, which was vulnerable by virtue of its geopolitical situation, and was experiencing increasing levels of crime amid a very difficult period of economic and political transition. His Government had passed new laws and set up a number of programmes and agencies to deal with issues such as drug abuse, corruption, hostage-taking and organized crime. Ukraine was also strengthening its cooperation with other States and international organizations in the field of crime control, and attached particular importance to regional cooperation. However, help was needed in technical equipment for border posts and the customs service, in the training of personnel and in the creation of information-exchange systems.

15. The problems of drug abuse and trafficking remained exceptionally acute; they were also closely linked with organized crime, terrorism, illicit trade in arms, and money-laundering, and called for the closest international cooperation, primarily through the United Nations and its agencies. Ukraine attached major significance to the activities of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, particularly with regard to the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. His Government was in favour of comprehensive measures to combat trafficking and curb illicit supply and demand. It was desirable to take a balanced approach to the problem of supply and demand, to the suppression of illicit trafficking, and to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

16. Steps were being taken to bring national legislation into line with the three major drug-control conventions, to which Ukraine was a party. Agreements had been signed with all members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He

emphasized the need for practical measures to implement recent decisions, and strict observance of all international conventions.

17. Mr. ILLUECA (Panama), speaking on behalf of the Group of Central American States (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), expressed support for the work of UNDCP, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). His delegation considered that the Global Programme of Action, was a good basis for activities designed to control drug abuse. He hoped that the Committee would support the holding of a second international conference in 1997, 10 years after the first one.

18. The production, transit and consumption of illicit drugs affected all countries. The President of Panama had proposed the creation of a multinational centre for the struggle against drug trafficking and related offences; his proposal had received a warm welcome from a number of Latin American Governments and from the Eleventh Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries. Panama intended to provide the necessary facilities for the creation of that centre, which could usefully be discussed at the proposed conference in 1997.

19. Regarding the "control" of drug abuse, he said it was a concept which typified the contradictions of modern culture. The United Nations had played a vital role in liberating peoples from colonialism and apartheid; yet human beings were still not free from all forms of servitude. The condition of the drug addict was one of the most agonizing of the few remaining forms of slavery; that slavery reflected a defect of society, which only a global, multidisciplinary effort could overcome.

20. The Governments of Central America attached great importance to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. They were endeavouring to play their part, within the confines of available resources, both on a national basis and through the Permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of the Production, Traffic, Consumption and Illicit Use of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. That effort included the struggle against drug-related crimes, including terrorism, trafficking in arms and money-laundering.

21. He commended the tireless efforts of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch in the promotion of international cooperation; its work had played an important part in the success of the recent Cairo Conference, and had significantly contributed to the work of UNDCP and the Centre for Human Rights. Its cooperation and coordination efforts on the governmental and non-governmental levels were an additional argument in support of the General Assembly's request for it to be upgraded to a Division.

22. Eradicating a $500-billion industry represented a considerable challenge in an increasingly globalized economy. The illegal accumulation of capital on such an enormous scale called for an expanded agenda which encompassed production, demand, consumption and trafficking and which included action by health and education authorities as well as by police and military forces. Concerted action by producer and consumer countries was one of the great challenges currently facing the international community, which must provide the United Nations with adequate resources for leading that effort.

23. The statement of the representative of Thailand at the current meeting had included some regrettable comments which were out of place in the Committee, on a subject which had already been discussed at length by the Security Council and the General Assembly and by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States. The ambiguity of those claims had slanderous implications and failed to reflect the transparent efforts of Panama's democratically elected Government to implement the Global Programme of Action.

24. Mr. KAMALUDDIN (India) said that his country's geographical location between two of the world's largest drug-producing regions had made it one of the transit countries whose problems must be addressed as part of the Global Programme of Action. India fully supported the views on that subject expressed at the recent Eleventh Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and reaffirmed its commitment to the fight against drugs at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels, as exemplified by its cooperation in the anti-drug activities of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and in the joint India-Pakistan-UNDCP programme.

25. Universal ratification of or accession to United Nations conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances would make those instruments more effective. His delegation welcomed efforts to incorporate the drug issue into the work of all relevant United Nations agencies, as well as the cooperation between UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch.

26. To enhance its programmes in developing countries, UNDCP should study the important role of non-governmental organizations in reducing demand in those countries. Developing countries also needed help in improving monitoring methods, taking advantage of the mass media, disseminating information and conducting expert studies and in providing specialized training and treatment services and rehabilitation programmes. He was pleased that national training courses for rehabilitation and after-care workers were to be held in some countries of South and South-East Asia, including India. Moreover, socio-economic development was a vital means of combating the poverty and marginalization that fostered involvement in the drug trade.

27. As one of the few countries that produced opium legally, India supported the view of INCB that global production of opiate raw materials should be restricted to levels corresponding to actual needs, and welcomed the decision of major importers to continue to import opiate raw materials primarily from traditional suppliers. For its part, the Indian Government had taken steps to monitor the cultivation of opium poppies and to control precursors, with cooperation from industry and the mass media, and had entered into a number of bilateral cooperation agreements. Lastly, he expressed India's support for the proposal to convene a world conference on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

28. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) said that his Government fully supported the efforts of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the latter's call for increased integration of anti-drug activities into the work of all the components of the United Nations system. In addition, UNDCP should strengthen its cooperation

with other United Nations bodies and with other intergovernmental organizations, including international financial institutions and regional development banks.

29. The drug problem was on the rise in Bulgaria owing to changing economic and social conditions and to the country's location on the drug traffickers' so-called Balkan route. Drug-related organized crime was becoming more active in Bulgaria, and the decentralization and privatization of the pharmaceuticals industry was making it harder to control psychotropic substances and medicines containing controlled substances. Consequently, the Government had set up a special police branch of the Ministry of the Interior to combat organized crime, and in 1993 had established an inter-ministerial committee to coordinate drug-control activities. In the area of technical assistance, Bulgaria cooperated with bilateral donors and with INCB and UNDCP. In addition, it was working on the implementation of international legal instruments on drugs and was bringing its national legislation into line with them. In view of the importance of regional and subregional cooperation on drug control, he hoped that UNDCP would consider establishing a separate regional section and a field office for south-eastern Europe. Moreover, UNDCP and INCB should further develop their information systems to assist the efforts of Member States. The entire United Nations system should intensify cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

30. Mrs. Tavares de Álvarez (Dominican Republic) took the Chair.

31. Mr. EVRIVIADES (Cyprus) said that his Government had participated actively in both the Naples Conference and the Cairo Congress, and supported the decisions of those forums. Organized crime was practically non-existent in Cyprus, apart from a few cases involving drug trafficking. The country had witnessed a decline in terrorist activities - most of which were attributable to foreign rivalry in the region - as a result of the Middle East peace process. While there was no official evidence of money-laundering in Cyprus, the Government was working to prevent such activities by cooperating with other countries, and particularly with the European Union.

32. Cyprus had acceded to a number of conventions on international cooperation in criminal justice and to bilateral cooperation agreements concerning transnational crime and drug trafficking. It supported the recommendations of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice that Member States should develop crime-prevention strategies adapted to local circumstances and that the United Nations should continue to foster research, exchange of information, training and technical cooperation in developing strategies to protect the environment by means of criminal law, as well as its proposals for the control of firearms. Moreover, Cyprus strongly supported the position of the European Union that all measures to fight crime and terrorism must fully respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

33. Although Cyprus was not a producer or a significant consumer of illegal drugs, its geographical location and its well-developed business, tourism and communications facilities made it a convenient brokering site for drug traffickers. However, the Government's highly effective measures and the traffickers' increased preference for the Balkan route were putting a stop to such activities in Cyprus. None the less, the lawful Government had no control

over the occupied part of Cyprus, which represented 37 per cent of its territory and 55 per cent of its coastline. That unacceptable situation created ideal conditions for transnational crime and drug trafficking, inter alia because seaports and airports in the occupied area were not under government supervision.

34. Universal ratification of or accession to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, full implementation of the Global Programme of Action and thorough integration of the conclusions of recent United Nations meetings on the issue would help to consolidate international commitment to fighting the drug menace. His delegation supported the idea of convening a world conference on drug abuse and trafficking, and welcomed the Mexican Government's suggestions on the issues that could be discussed at such a forum.

35. Cyprus welcomed the efforts of UNDCP to develop article 17 of the 1988 Convention and urged it to pay special attention to article 10 thereof, which concerned assistance to transit States. UNDCP should also expand its "debt-for-drugs" swaps to include debt relief for transit countries. Lastly, he reiterated his Government's proposal that Cyprus should become the official international narcotics information centre for the Near and Middle East.

36. Mr. COLOMA (Chile) said that the fight against illegal drugs called for bilateral and multilateral action by governmental and non-governmental entities both within and outside the United Nations system, and that all such action must take place within the framework of international law. His delegation was convinced that demand reduction influenced the supply and vice versa, and hoped that the principle of shared responsibility between producer and consumer countries would be fully recognized.

37. In January 1995, his Government had promulgated a comprehensive law penalizing all criminal activities related to illicit drugs. Moreover, it cooperated fully with other countries by providing foreign agencies and courts with legal and financial records, including those that were confidential by law, and by cooperating in all extradition procedures, even in the absence of treaties with the country concerned. The judgements handed down in other countries were fully recognized for the purpose of identifying recidivism as an aggravating circumstance.

38. It was important to take a comprehensive approach to the drug problem and to bear in mind that economic and social factors such as poverty, unemployment and the lack of public services, education and appropriate family models fostered the production, trafficking and abuse of narcotics. His delegation supported the proposal to convene a world conference on narcotics, and hoped that a favourable decision would be reached on the question at the next session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

39. Mr. ARDA (Turkey) said that his country was committed to taking all necessary measures against organized transnational crime and considered the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan a step in the right direction. The Cairo Congress was an integral part of the international community's effort to fight such criminal activity. Turkey attached great

importance to bilateral as well as regional and international cooperation in combating all forms of transnational crime. Terrorism was the greatest threat to world peace. International cooperation was essential to ensure that terrorists and other criminals were unable to find support, weapons and sanctuaries. His country was ready to support initiatives to establish mechanisms for information-sharing in order to identify the front organizations of terrorist groups.

40. With regard to international drug control, Turkey felt that, despite all the efforts made, there was a discrepancy between the intentions expressed by States and the implementation of specific measures against drug abuse. His delegation supported the idea of an international conference on the subject. International cooperation was the only way to eliminate drug trafficking; and the production and marketing of essential chemicals used in the illegal production of drugs must be kept under strict control. Close cooperation among law-enforcement agencies would increase the number of seizures of illegally produced drugs. His Government strictly controlled the chemicals that entered the country and had established a data bank on routes used by traffickers. Turkey was amending its legislation in accordance with the Global Programme of Action, and sought to ensure the success of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

41. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) said that his country, within its overall development strategy, had drawn up a programme to strengthen national security structures to protect its citizens against organized crime. Tunisia attached particular importance to the implementation of the relevant international instruments and firmly supported the follow-up to the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan as well as the recommendations of the Cairo Congress. His country supported all measures to strengthen United Nations programmes in crime prevention and criminal justice as well as international drug control.

42. Tunisia had improved its institutional and operational capacities in the field of crime prevention and was carrying out a programme to reform the administration of justice. Its crime-prevention measures were designed to strengthen security and educational structures in order to enable prisoners to earn income and facilitate their rehabilitation. Steps were also being taken to upgrade penal institutions. In the field of international drug control, his country had enacted in 1992 a law designed to protect children and young people against drug abuse. Efforts were being made to find better ways to eliminate the production, marketing and consumption of narcotic drugs and provide assistance to drug addicts and promote their social reintegration.

43. Tunisia had participated in various initiatives at the African, Arab and Euro-Mediterranean level to enhance cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice. The relevant bodies of the United Nations system should continue to focus on the links between terrorism and transnational organized crime to enable the international community to maintain its vigilance. Tunisia, which had already adapted its domestic legislation in implementation of the resolution adopted on that question by the Ninth Congress, hoped that similar measures would be taken at the regional, interregional and international levels and that

cooperation would be institutionalized in order to put an end to national and transnational criminal networks.

44. Mr. PERERA (Sri Lanka) said that international cooperation was indispensable in devising crime-prevention and drug-control strategies. The results of the Cairo Congress and the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan were major strides towards reaching an international consensus on the need for urgent action in that field. Sri Lanka supported the comprehensive resolution and other decisions of the Cairo Congress pertaining to international cooperation and practical assistance for strengthening the rule of law. He underscored the importance of developing United Nations model instruments, such as a convention or conventions against organized transnational crime; implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; and the treatment of children who were victims of crime. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should follow up the recommendations put forward at the Congress with practical steps for international cooperation. The consensus achieved at the Cairo Congress and the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan provided a comprehensive framework for meaningful international action.

45. Sri Lanka reaffirmed its support for General Assembly resolution 49/168, on international action to combat drug abuse and illicit production and trafficking. His country, which was a party to all United Nations conventions on drugs, had a comprehensive policy and an institutional framework for combating drug abuse through a multifaceted strategy based on enforcement, preventive education, public awareness, treatment, rehabilitation and international cooperation. New legislation was currently under consideration in order to strengthen Sri Lanka's domestic legal basis.

46. Mr. TARASENKO (Russian Federation) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the anti-drug activities of the United Nations as the main centre for coordinating international action in that field, and hoped that those activities would be made more effective by the restructuring of the relevant United Nations bodies. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) had carried out significant work in enhancing coordination both within and outside the United Nations system. In that connection, the Russian Federation supported the further strengthening of cooperation between UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Secretariat.

47. Universal accession to the main international drug-control conventions was a major way to strengthen international cooperation to combat drug trafficking. While his delegation did not oppose the convening of an international conference on narcotic drugs, it was necessary to examine the practical need for such a forum, since UNDCP had already laid down the priorities for a global drug strategy, on which the international community should focus its efforts. The Programme's funds must also be taken into consideration in that regard.

48. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had carried out significant work in the priority areas for international cooperation. Most of its latest decisions had a practical orientation and reflected the need to take urgent countermeasures at the global level. His delegation supported the firm position taken by the Commission and INCB on the inadmissibility of proposals to legalize the

non-medicinal use of narcotic drugs, since such action could seriously weaken the international drug-control system and the effectiveness of international agreements in that field.

49. In strengthening cooperation among law-enforcement agencies to combat drug trafficking, it was necessary to focus on practical measures relating to money-laundering, supply control and cooperation between customs and border authorities, and to ensure the punishment of international drug offenders by enhancing cooperation in legal assistance and extradition. Lastly, he underscored the need to make use of the experience acquired by regional anti-drug bodies in order to promote regional cooperation.

50. Mr. DEHGHANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country, a founding member of the Economic Cooperation Organization, was actively participating in efforts to promote drug-control activities and was a party to most of the international drug-control conventions. Referring to General Assembly resolution 48/12, he stressed the crucial importance of national demand-reduction programmes and supported the view that the 1988 Convention should be amended to ensure a greater commitment by Governments to demand-reduction strategies. The idea of the possible legalization of the non-medical use of drugs under the pretext of promoting social freedom was contrary to the provisions of the Convention and would seriously undermine national anti-drug programmes. The Islamic Republic of Iran supported the proposal for a second international conference on drug abuse and trafficking to be held in 1997 in order to express the greater political will of the world community to combat the threat of drugs and adopt an international declaration on demand reduction.

51. The alarming extent of the drug problem in South-West Asia underscored the need for enhanced law-enforcement capacities in the border areas of the countries concerned to prevent drug smuggling. In the past 10 years, his Government had spent more than $200 million on the country's eastern borders to block the influx of illegal drugs. As a result, a large number of drug traffickers had been arrested and their networks had been dismantled. The Islamic Republic of Iran also placed much emphasis on demand reduction and carried out extensive activities, including preventive education in schools and drug-awareness campaigns through the mass media. It had 17 rehabilitation centres, with treatment programmes emphasizing work therapy for drug addicts.

52. Lastly, he drew attention to the grave threat posed by illicit poppy cultivation in South-West Asia, which should be given serious attention by the international community. Significant resources should be allocated for crop substitution by farmers in poppy-growing areas; and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) should address that question.

53. Mr. KIRKLAND (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to reserve the right to respond at a later date to some of the points made by the representative of Thailand at the current meeting.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.